

NEWS RELEASE



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THREE CHARGED IN FEDERAL COURTHOUSE BOMBING

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - August 6, 2008

San Diego - United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced today that a federal grand jury sitting in San Diego yesterday handed up a Superseding Indictment charging Rachelle Lynette Carlock, Ella Louise Sanders, and Eric Reginald Robinson with the use of a weapon of mass destruction and other charges, arising from the bombing of the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Courthouse in San Diego on May 4, 2008, and a related bombing of a Federal Express distribution center on 47th Street in San Diego on April 25, 2008.

According to the Superseding Indictment, from at least March 2008 to May 4, 2008, Carlock, Sanders and Robinson conspired to construct, test, and detonate a series of pipe bombs, including the bombs used against the Federal Courthouse and the Federal Express distribution center. The Superseding Indictment alleges that, to construct the bombs, the defendants stole pipe materials from The Home Depot and acquired explosive material (Hodgdon's Triple Seven Power) from a gun shop in El Cajon, California.

The Superseding Indictment alleges that, on the night of the Federal Courthouse bombing: Carlock placed three pipe bombs in a backpack, Sanders assisted Carlock in concealing her identity, and Robinson then drove with Carlock from Menifee, California, to the vicinity of the Federal Courthouse in San Diego. Robinson waited in a vehicle while Carlock placed and detonated the bombs at the front doors of the Federal Courthouse. According to the Superseding Indictment, Robinson then drove Carlock back to Menifee, California.

On June 10, 2008, Carlock was first charged by Indictment with eight felonies relating to her purchase of explosive materials from the gun shop in El Cajon on April 7 and May 1, 2008 and her attempt to purchase additional explosive materials from the gun shop on May 13, 2008, over a week after the Federal Courthouse bombing. The Superseding Indictment includes these original charges, but, as mentioned, adds numerous charges against each defendant.

Federal agents arrested Robinson yesterday. It is anticipated that Robinson will be arraigned today before United States Magistrate Judge Peter C. Lewis in El Centro, California. It is anticipated that, when Robinson is arraigned, Judge Lewis will schedule a date for Robinson's next court appearance.

Sanders is currently in state prison in Central California, serving an unrelated state sentence. It is anticipated that she will be transported to San Diego for arraignment on the Superseding Indictment on a future date. Carlock is currently in federal custody in San Diego. It is anticipated that she also will be appearing for arraignment on the Superseding Indictment before the Honorable Margaret M. McKeown in federal court in San Diego on a future date, which has not yet been set by the Court.

United States Attorney Hewitt said, "These arrests and prosecution reflect the unwavering commitment of all in federal law enforcement to protect the health and safety of all the citizens of San Diego and Imperial Counties. This 17-count indictment was returned against the defendants only three months after the bombing of the federal courthouse in San Diego. We are all safer today because of the outstanding and painstaking investigative work of the agents of FBI and ATF on this case."

FBI Special Agent in Charge Keith Slotter commented, “These were egregious and dangerous acts. The device that detonated in front of the courthouse could have inflicted serious harm to anyone in the vicinity of the blast. Thankfully, no one was injured; but, make no mistake, the indictment sends a clear message: anyone who attempts to harm, or even threaten, the citizens of this community will be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. All levels of law enforcement will pull together to find those responsible, bring them to justice, and ensure that the American people continue to live in safety.”

DEFENDANTS

Criminal Case No. 08-CR-1895-MMM

Rachelle Lynette Carlock
Ella Louise Sanders
Eric Reginald Robinson

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Count 1 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2332a - Conspiracy to Use a Weapon of Mass Destruction;
Maximum penalty: Life in prison

Count 2 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2332a - Use of a Weapon of Mass Destruction;
Maximum penalty: Life in prison

Count 3 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 371 - Conspiracy to Maliciously Damage Buildings, to Possess Firearms, and to Make Firearms; Maximum penalty: 5 years in prison

Count 4 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(f)(1) - Malicious Damage to Buildings and Real Property by Means of an Explosive; Maximum penalty: Not less than 5 years, and not more than 20 years, in prison

Counts 5-6 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c) - Possession of a Destructive Device in Relation to a Crime of Violence; Maximum penalties: Not less than 30 years in prison

Counts 7-8 (All defendants)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(h)(1) - Use of Explosive to Commit a Felony;
Maximum penalty: 10 years in prison

Count 9 (Ella Louise Sanders)

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 842(I) and 844(a) - Felon in Possession of Explosive Materials;
Maximum penalty: 10 years in prison

Counts 10, 13 and 16 (Rachelle Lynette Carlock)

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 842(a)(2) and 844(a) - Use of False Identification to Obtain Explosive Materials; Maximum penalties: 10 years in prison

Counts 11 and 14 (Rachelle Lynette Carlock)

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 842(I) and 844(a) - Felon in Possession of Explosive Materials;
Maximum penalty: 10 years in prison

Counts 12, 15 and 17 (Rachelle Lynette Carlock)

Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1028(a)(7) and (b)(2)(B) - Fraud in Connection with Identification Documents; Maximum penalties: 5 years in prison

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Joint Terrorism Task Force
San Diego Police Department
San Diego County Sheriff's Department

An indictment itself is not evidence that the defendants committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.